# SKULL

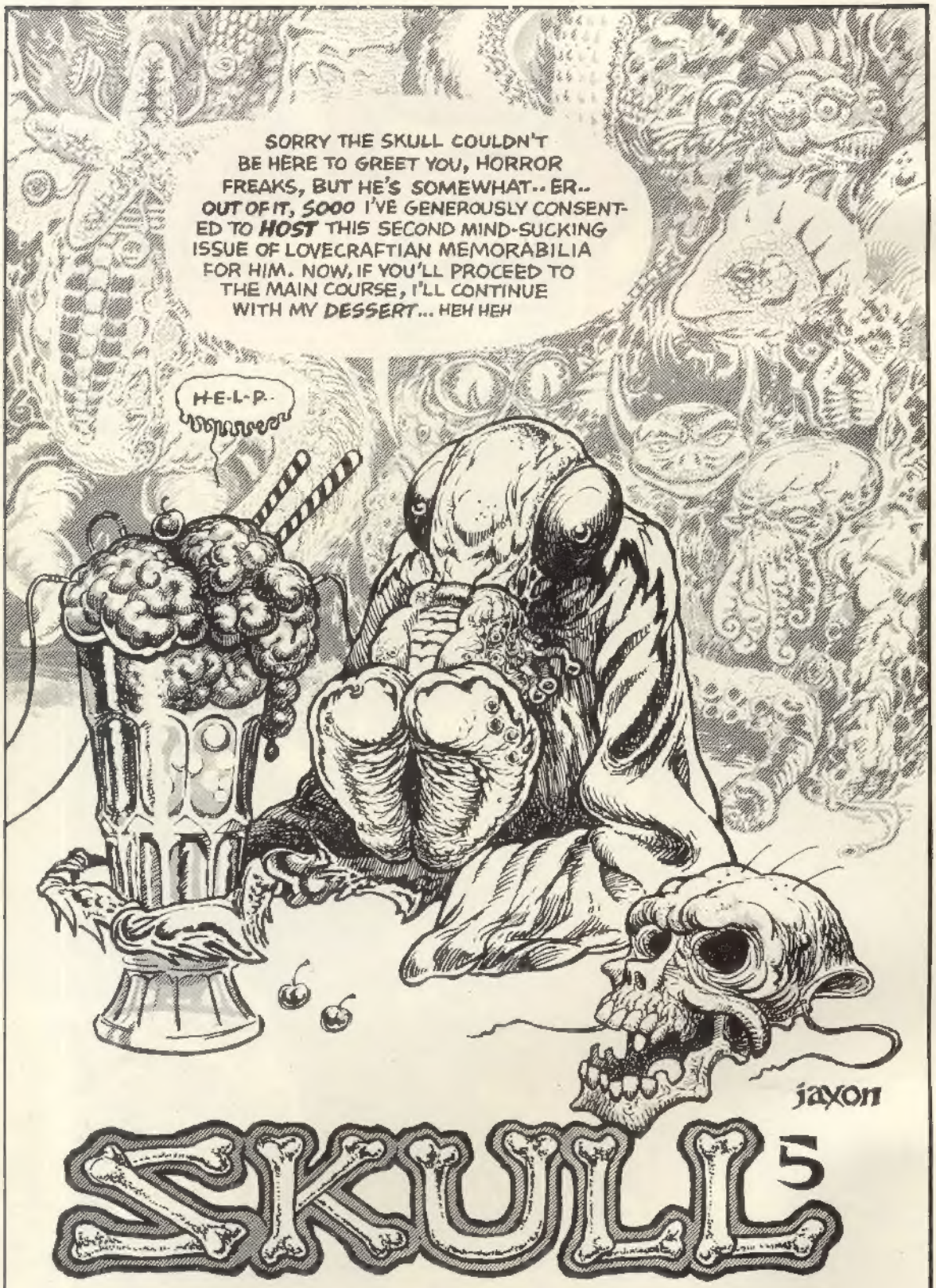
50¢

UNDERGROUND CARTOON WORKERS

LAST GASP

ADULTS ONLY

No. 5




# SKULL 5

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# THE RATS IN THE WALLS

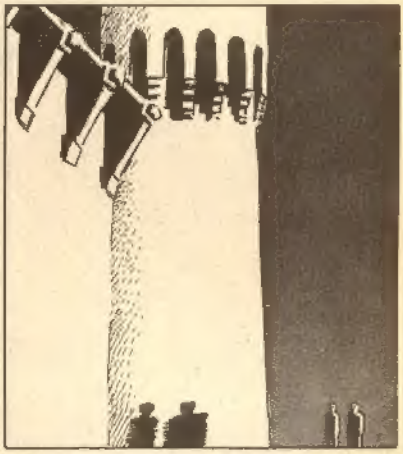
BY H. P. LOVECRAFT

IN JULY, 1923, I MOVED INTO THE RESTORED EXHAM PRIORY. THE ANCIENT ESTATE HAD BEEN IN THE DE LA POER FAMILY FOR A TIME MEASURED IN CENTURIES.

I AM THE LAST OF THE DELAPORES. THE NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES WILL BE RELIEVED UNDOUBTEDLY, WHEN THE DELAPORES ARE GONE FOREVER.

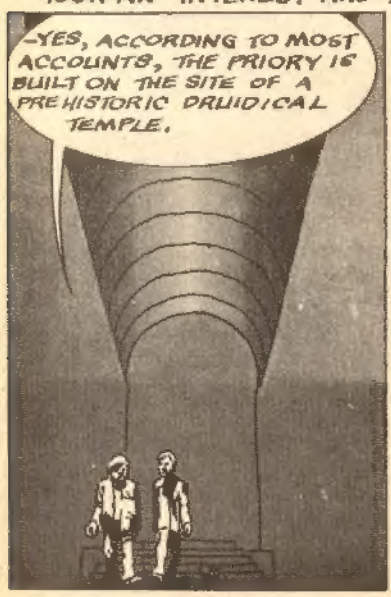
THE PEOPLE HAVE LONG HATED AND FEARED MY FAMILY THOUGH MY ANCESTORS HAD QUIT THE AREA MANY GENERATIONS AGO. I HADN'T LEARNED OF THE STRANGE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING WALTER DE LA POER'S FLIGHT TO AMERICA. IT WAS THEN HE CHANGED THE SPELLING TO DELAPORE.

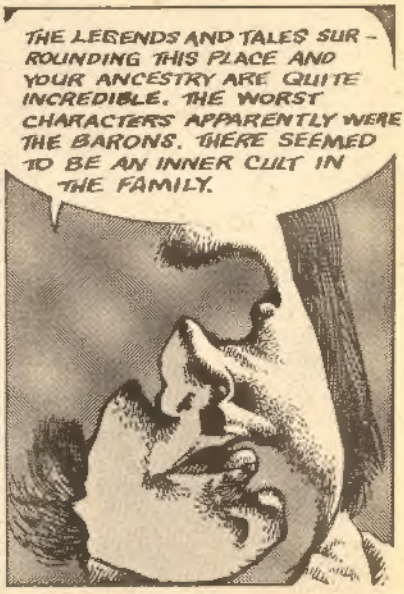
My forebear related nothing of his clouded past to his children or grandchildren. It was my son, when in England as an army aviator, who discovered the existence of Exham Priory through his British friend, Captain Edward Norrys. It seems that the ruined estate had fallen into the hands of the Norrys family. My son, Alfred, wrote of it often.



His homecoming was not a happy one. The war had severly maimed him. I cared for my boy for 2 years while he died slowly.

With no family left, I resolved to buy and restore the ancient edifice. Norrys took an interest and helped me in my endeavors.



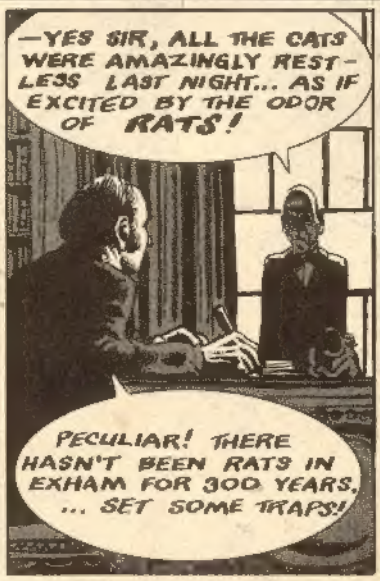


GHASTLY, GRISLY BALLADS AND STORIES SURVIVE IN GUARDED WHISPERS. THERE WAS A MARY DE LA POER, WHO SHORTLY AFTER HER MARRIAGE TO THE EARL OF SHREWSFIELD...WAS KILLED BY HER BRIDEGROOM. THE SLAYER WAS ABSOLVED AND EVEN BLESSED BY A PRIEST WHEN THE VICTIMS HEATHEN HABITS WERE REVEALED. THERE WAS MENTION OF A SQUEALING WHITE THING ON WHICH SIR JOHN CLAVES HORSE HAD TROD... AND OF A SERVANT WHO WENT RAVING MAD AT WHAT HE SAW IN THE PRIORY IN FULL DAYLIGHT.

AND MOST VIVID OF ALL WAS THE EPIC OF THE RATS— THE SCAMPERING ARMY OF OBSCENE VERMIN WHICH BURST FORTH FROM THE CASTLE, THREE MONTHS AFTER YOUR ANCESTOR DESERTED THE COUNTRY. THE FILTHY RAVENOUS ARMY DEVOURED FOWL, CATS, DOGS, HOGS,... EVEN TWO HAPLESS HUMANS.

TELL ME OF WALTER DE LA POER. WHY DID HE FLEE TO AMERICA?
THE ACCOUNTS ARE RATHER CIRCUMSTANTIAL ON THAT. HE WAS ACCUSED OF KILLING HIS ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD WITH THE AID OF FOUR SERVANTS... THIS HAPPENED AFTER A SHOCKING DISCOVERY WHICH CHANGED HIS WHOLE DEMEANOR.
THE NATURE OF THIS DISCOVERY WAS NEVER BROUGHT TO LIGHT... WELL I MUST GO NOW DELAPORE. I HOPE YOU'LL INVITE ME OVER AGAIN SOON.

NIGAMAN!
WHAT'S THE MATTER? SETTLE DOWN!
RRROUR!

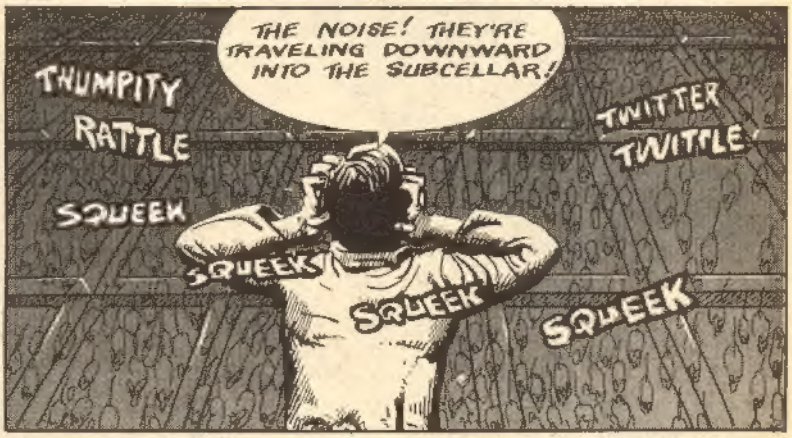

—YES SIR, ALL THE CATS WERE AMAZINGLY REST-LESS LAST NIGHT... AS IF EXCITED BY THE ODOR OF RATS!
PECULIAR! THERE HASN'T BEEN RATS IN EXHAM FOR 300 YEARS. ... SET SOME TRAPS!

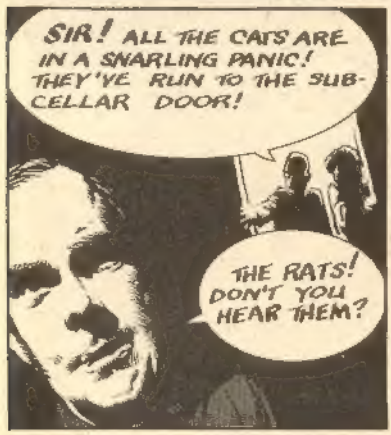
AAAG
MEOW
HISSS

RUSTLE
RUSTLE
SKITTER
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
RATS!! MILLIONS OF THEM!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK

NOTHING HERE... THE TRAPS ARE SPRUNG!... COME NIGAMAN WE'LL EXPLORE THE OTHER ROOMS
RRROURRR FST!

LORD! THEY'RE BEHIND THE PANELING!
SKITTER THUMP
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK

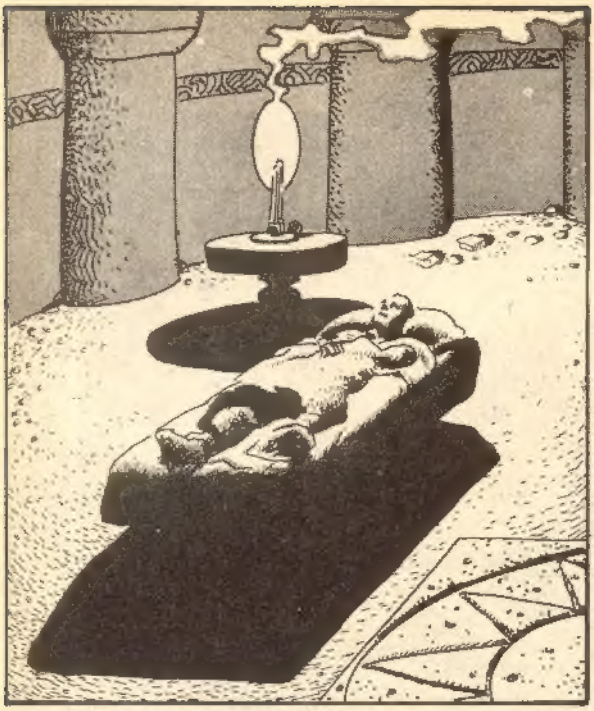

THE NOISE! THEY'RE TRAVELING DOWNWARD INTO THE SUBCELLAR!
THUMPITY
RATTLE
SQUEEK
TWITTER
TWITTLE
SQUEEK
SQUEEK
SQUEEK


SIR! ALL THE CATS ARE IN A SNARLING PANIC! THEY'VE RUN TO THE SUB-CELLAR DOOR!
THE RATS! DON'T YOU HEAR THEM?

RATS?... WE HEARD NOTHING BUT THE CATS SIR.

—IT WAS AWFUL LAST NIGHT. COULD YOU COME AND SPEND TONIGHT HERE NORRYS? I MUST DISCOVER THE CAUSE OF THIS MANIFESTATION!

THIS VAULT, THE LOWEST ROOM IN THE PRIORY, WAS BUILT BY ROMAN HANDS...
PASSING THE NIGHT DOWN HERE, WE WONT MISS YOUR RATS... IF THEY APPEAR.
THESE INSCRIPTIONS— "ATYS..." THOSE HIDEOUS EASTERN RITES.



GAUGH!!
MROWRRRRR
ROWRRRR

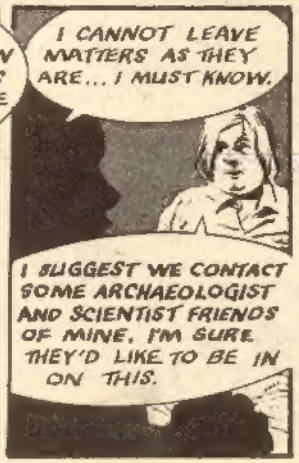
DELAPORE! WHAT IS IT?
HSSST
FFFT
MEOWWWW

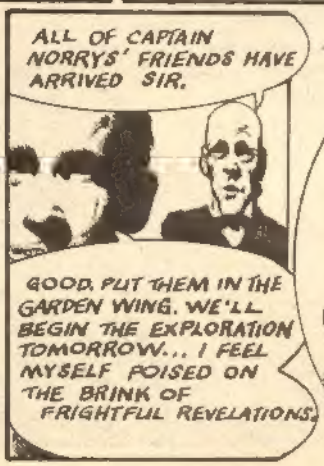
THE RATS! THEY DESCEND FURTHER YET!
MEOWRRRR
HUH? I HEAR ONLY THE CATS!
KRAWRRR

ARE YOU DEAF?... ... NOW THE SCURRYING SUBSIDES!

YOUR CAT SMELLS SOMETHING BELOW THIS PRE ROMAN ALTAR!
LOOK AT THE CANDLE!

THERE IS UNDOUBTEDLY A CHAMBER BELOW YOUR SUBCELLAR, PERHAPS JUST A NARROW FISSURE THAT EXTENDS FROM THE CLIFFS FACE.


I CANNOT LEAVE MATTERS AS THEY ARE... I MUST KNOW.
I SUGGEST WE CONTACT SOME ARCHAEOLOGIST AND SCIENTIST FRIENDS OF MINE. I'M SURE THEY'D LIKE TO BE IN ON THIS.

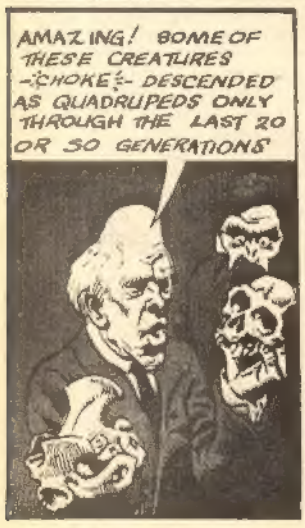

ALL OF CAPTAIN NORRYS' FRIENDS HAVE ARRIVED SIR.
GOOD. PUT THEM IN THE GARDEN WING. WE'LL BEGIN THE EXPLORATION TOMORROW... I FEEL MYSELF POISED ON THE BRINK OF FRIGHTFUL REVELATIONS.

THE DREAMS AGAIN!

I'M AFRAID THESE BONES AREN'T QUITE HUMAN.

THEY LOOK AS THOUGH THEY WERE TRYING TO ESCAPE!

HMMM!... THIS PASSAGE— THE CHISEL STROKES... WERE CARVED FROM BENEATH!

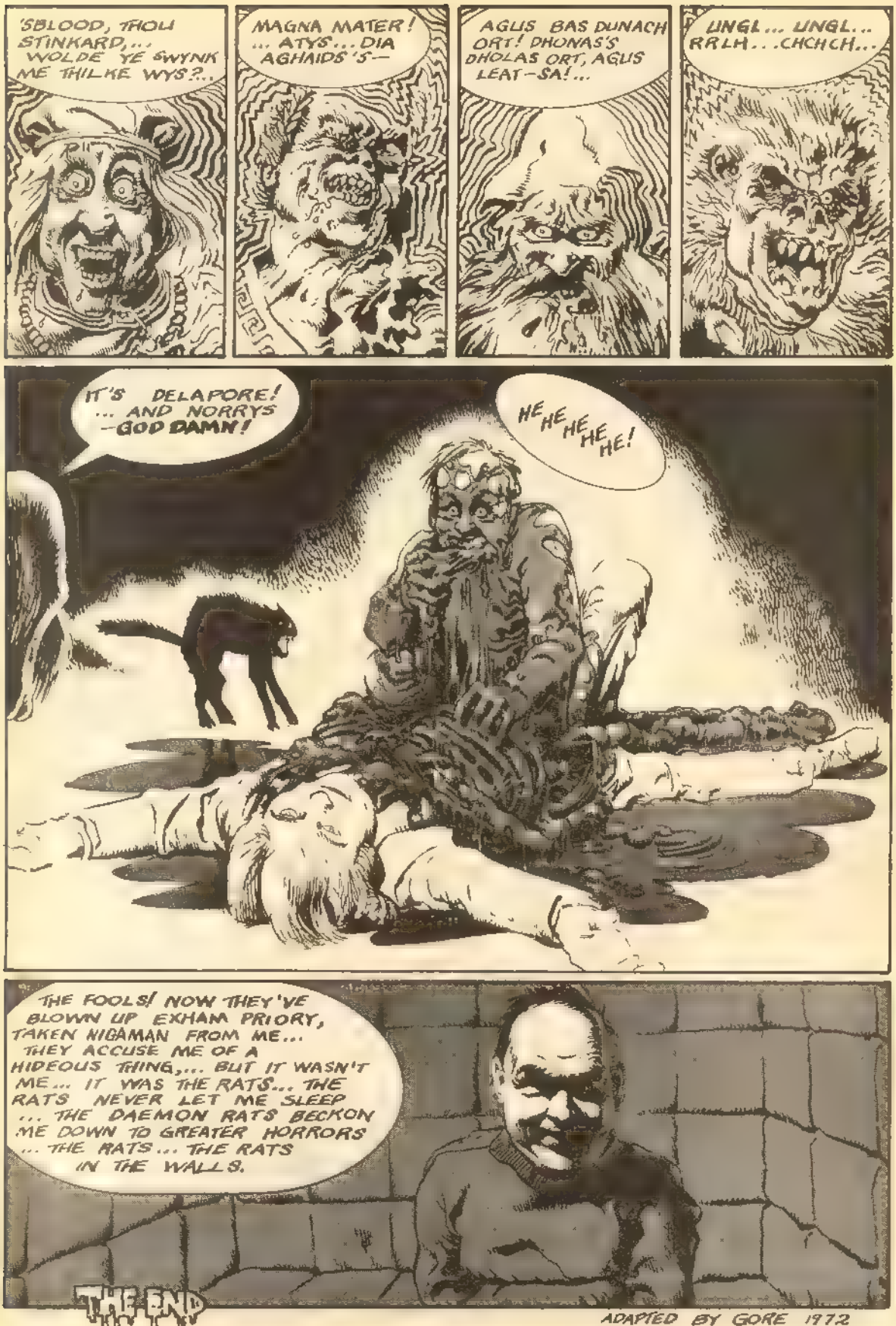

AMAZING! SOME OF THESE CREATURES -CHOKE- DESCENDED AS QUADRUPEDS ONLY THROUGH THE LAST 20 OR 50 GENERATIONS

THEY WERE APPARENTLY KEPT IN THESE STONE PENS -- BUT BROKE LOOSE DRIVEN BY HUNGER OR FEAR!

THESE MARKINGS DESCRIBE A RITUAL ... LORD!! ... THEY ... ATE ...

GAG-KOFF IT'S AN ENGLISH BUTCHER SHOP... BUT...

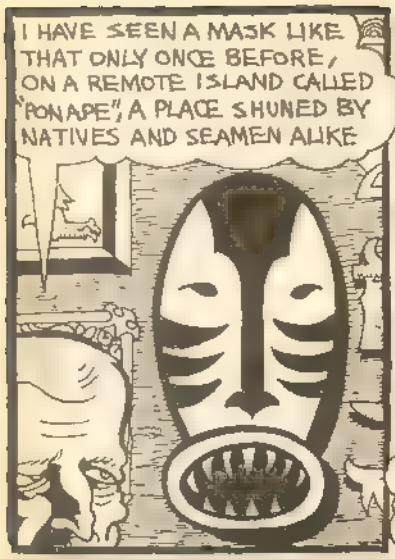
THESE BONES ARE HUMAN
N NO... NOOOO! IT'S...
THE DE LA POER CREST. ...ONE OF MY ANCESTORS STOPPED BY THE DAGGER OF WALTER DE LA POER.
WHAT LIES IN THESE BLACK PITS?!!
THE RATS— THEY'RE RETURNING! THE RATS!
THEY'LL EAT ANOTHER DE LA POER; -BECAUSE DE LA POER EATS FORBIDDEN THINGS! THERE'S A PIG THING! EAT!!
IS IT EDWARD NORRYS' FAT FACE ON THAT FUNGUS THING? HE LIVED; BUT MY BOY DIED! SHALL A NORRYS HOLD THE LANDS OF A DE LA POER? CURSE YOU!!


'SBLOOD, THOU STINKARD,... WOLDE YE SWYNK ME THILKE WYS?...
MAGNA MATER! ... ATYS... DIA AGHAIDS'S—
AGUS BAS DUNACH ORT! DHONAS'S DHOLAS ORT, AGUS LEAT—SA!...
UNGL... UNGL... RRLH...CHCHCH...
IT'S DELAPORE! ... AND NORRYS —GOD DAMN!
HE HE HE HE HE!
THE FOOLS! NOW THEY'VE BLOWN UP EXHAM PRIORY, TAKEN NIGAMAN FROM ME... THEY ACCUSE ME OF A HIDEOUS THING,... BUT IT WASN'T ME... IT WAS THE RATS... THE RATS NEVER LET ME SLEEP ... THE DAEMON RATS BECKON ME DOWN TO GREATER HORRORS ... THE RATS... THE RATS IN THE WALLS.
THE END
ADAPTED BY GORE 1972

Wilfred Keel
Seeker of the Strange
THE HAND OF DARKNESS
GASP!
NECRONOMICON
IN MY MANY JOUNEYS INTO THE STRANGE, MACABRE AND AT TIMES, FASCINATING, WORLD OF THE UNKNOWN, THE CASE OF JAMES WORMWOOD REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST PROFOUNDLY DISTURBING OF MY CAREER
© SPAIN STUDIOS

ONE EVENING I RECEIVED A CALL FROM ANDREA WORMWOOD
HELLO WILFRED? THIS IS ANDREA, JAMES AND I ARE HAVING A HOUSE WARMING PARTY NEXT THURSDAY AND WE'D LIKE YOU TO ATTEND
JAMES AND ANDREA WERE OLD FRIENDS. THEY HAD RECENTLY PURCHASED THE PHILLIPS ESTATE NEAR INNSMOUTH
I'D BE DELIGHTED TO, ANDREA. I HAVE A FEW APPOINTMENTS, BUT I'LL TRY TO SHAKE THEM OFF EARLY
OH DO TRY TO MAKE IT
THOOMS
THOOMS
THOOMS THOOMS
THE PHILLIPS MANSION STOOD BY THE SEA. ITS FORMER OWNER HAD DISAPPEARED UNDER MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES
IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU WILFRED, COME MEET OUR OTHER GUESTS
I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MR. STRAVANOS NARCROPOLIS
HOW DO YOU DO
AH YES, I BELIEVE I ONCE TRAVELED ON ONE OF YOUR SHIPS, MR NARCROPOLIS
MR AND MRS MAMOULIAN ZANG
MADAM SUPINE AND DR FRANZ STOERLING, PROFESSOR OF METABIOTICS
BUT IS THE DRAMATURGY OF YEATS TRULY A COMMENT ON HIS AESTHETIC ICONOCLASM
I THINK THERE ARE CERTAIN PARALLELS IN MODERN FRENCH THEATRE
IT IS GOOD TO SEE THAT YOU HAVE SURVIVED A VOYAGE ON ONE OF MY SHIPS, MR CREEL
FRANKLY THERE WERE TIMES WHEN I DOUBTED I WOULD
IT'LL SNAP YOUR STIX

THISESS A MOST FASCINATING PLACE YOU HAFF HERE M.STER VORMVOOD, DO YOU MIND EF I LOOK AROUND T
FACT, HERR STÖERLING HAVE BEEN MEANING TO TAKE EVERYONE ON A TOUR OF THE PLACE
THOOMB
HOW ULTRE
I ACTUALLY PICKED UP THE PLACE FOR A SONG SEEMS AS THOUGH THERES SOME LOCAL SUPERSTITION CONNECTED TO IT
SOME PRETTY WEIRD ARTICLES YA GOT HERE
YES I WAS QUITE FORTUNATE ALL OF THE PREVIOUS OWNERS ESTATE WAS LEFT INTACT
I SMELL THE SMELL OF DOOM EEN THEES HOUSE


I HAVE SEEN A MASK LIKE THAT ONLY ONCE BEFORE, ON A REMOTE ISLAND CALLED "PONAPE", A PLACE SHUNED BY NATIVES AND SEAMEN ALIKE

I MUST CONFESS I AM IGNORANT OF MOST OF THESE ARTIFACTS, AS I AM OF THE BOOKS CONTAINED IN THIS LIBRARY

HMM.. INDEED! A RARE EARLY EDITION OF VON JUNZT'S "UNAUSPRECHLICHEN CULTEN"

I KNOW THESE BOOKS YOU HAVE HERE, JAMES. THEY ALL COME OF A DARK AND SINISTER PAST
RING
AH, PERHAPS THAT'S THE CALL I'VE BEEN EXPECTING

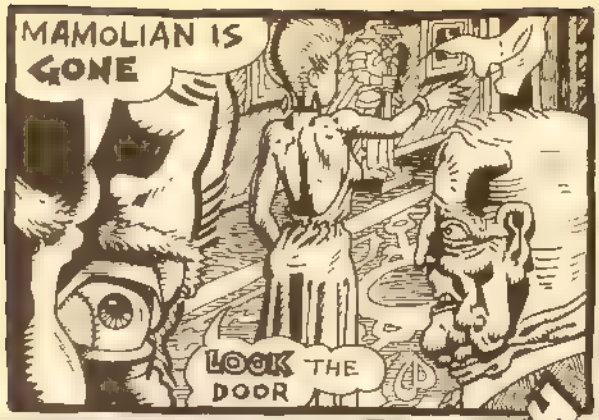
YOU'VE BROUGHT THE PARCEL
YAH, GOT IT RITE HERE

CHOKE
GOOD LORD
YOU SEE, I DO NOT INTEND TO LET THIS COLLECTION I'VE AQUIRED, STAGNATE

WITH TRADE RECENTLY OPENED MY CONTACTS WERE ABLE TO SMUGGLE THIS FROM INNERMOST RED CHINA
IT MUST BE INCREDIBLY ANCIENT
AS THE NEW ARRIVAL FUMBLES ABOUT IN AN OBVIOUSLY INEBREATED CONDITION

THE COMPANY'S ATTENTION IS MOMENTARILY DISTRACTED.
BEER CAN
OUGH
TITER TITER

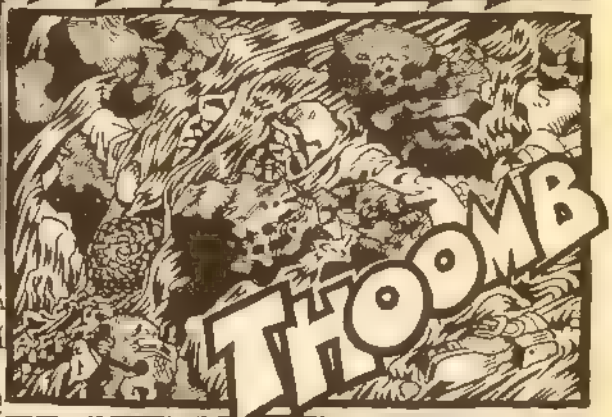
THE HAND
IT'S GONE

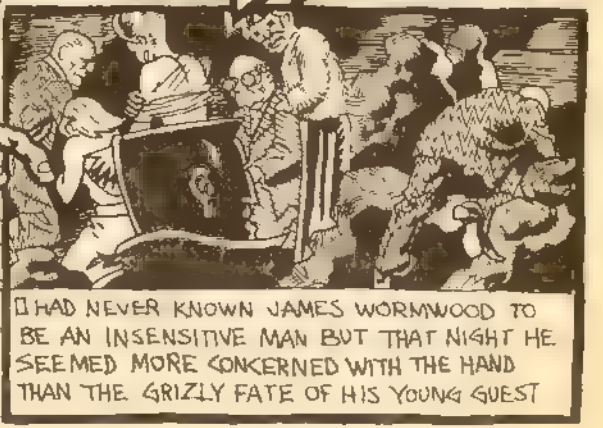

MAMOLIAN IS GONE
LOCK THE DOOR

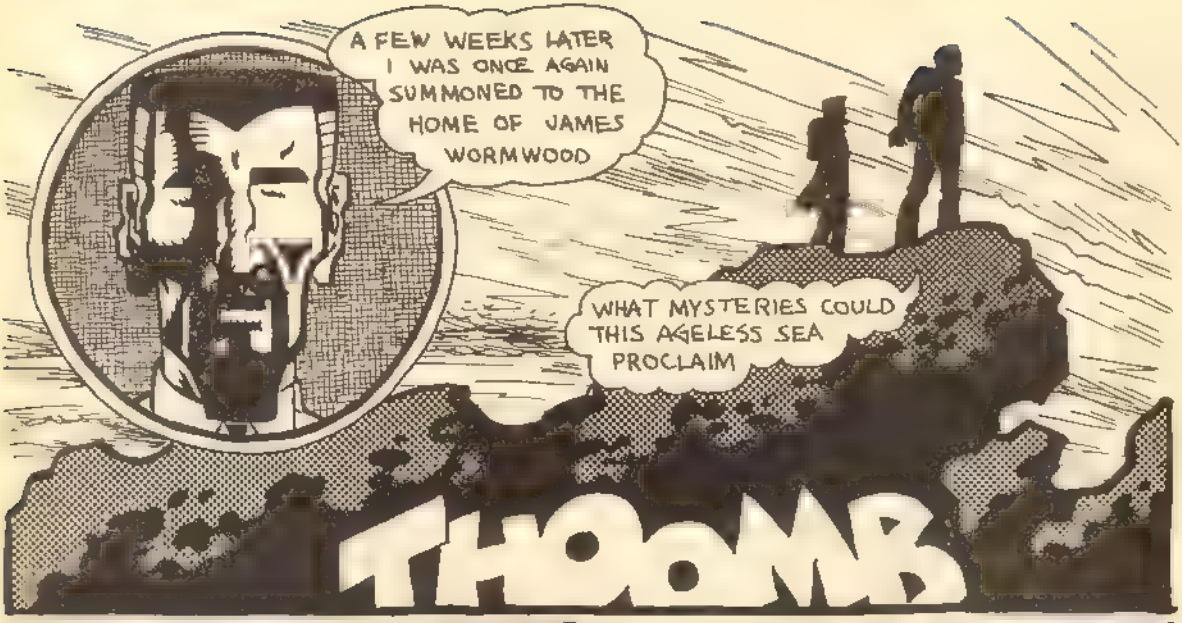
COME BACK YOU FOOL, YOU'LL BE KILLED
NOTHING CAN HAPPEN TO ME, THE MOON IS IN LIBRA

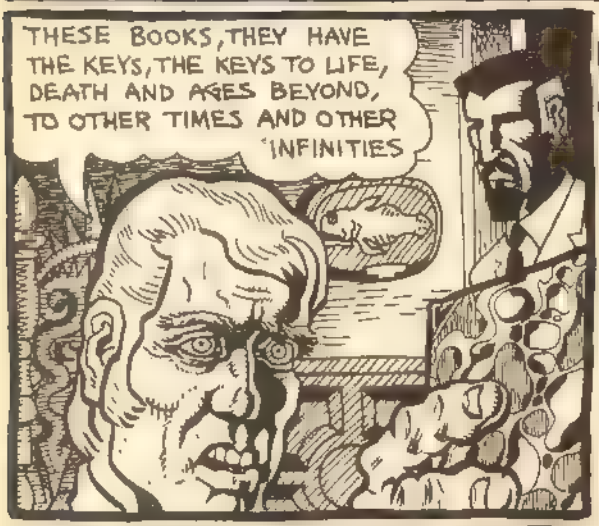
AAAAAAAAAAAAAGH

EEEEEEEEEE

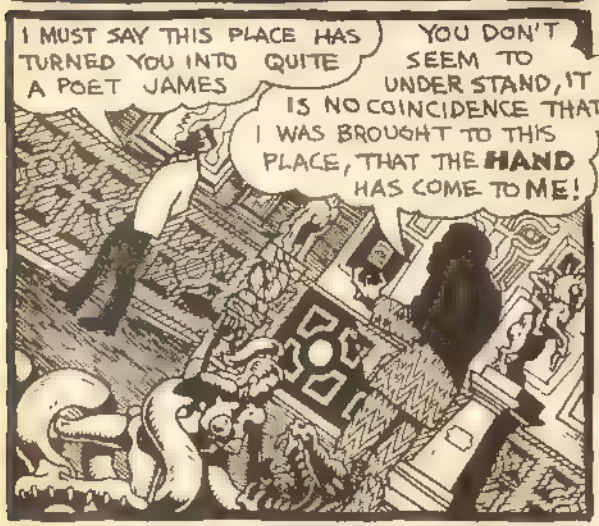

THOOMB

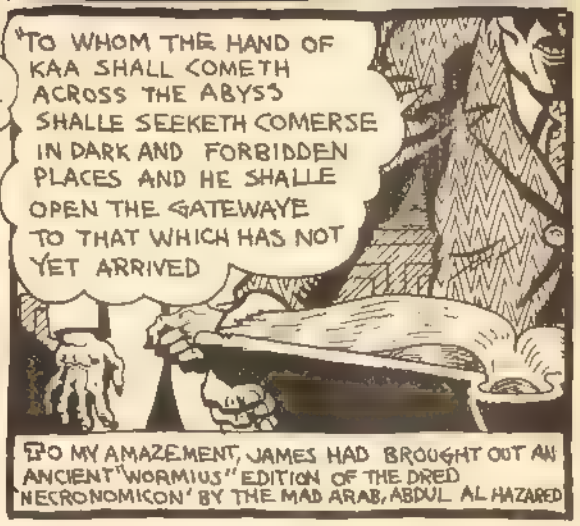

I HAD NEVER KNOWN JAMES WORMWOOD TO BE AN INSENSITIVE MAN BUT THAT NIGHT HE SEEMED MORE CONCERNED WITH THE HAND THAN THE GRIZLY FATE OF HIS YOUNG GUEST


A FEW WEEKS LATER I WAS ONCE AGAIN SUMMONED TO THE HOME OF JAMES WORMWOOD
WHAT MYSTERIES COULD THIS AGELESS SEA PROCLAIM
THOOMB


THESE BOOKS, THEY HAVE THE KEYS, THE KEYS TO LIFE, DEATH AND AGES BEYOND, TO OTHER TIMES AND OTHER INFINITIES

COUNTLESS AEONS HAVE PASSED, MAN'S TIME ON THIS PLANET IS LIKE THE PASSING OF A DARK CLOUD


I MUST SAY THIS PLACE HAS TURNED YOU INTO QUITE A POET JAMES
YOU DON'T SEEM TO UNDER STAND, IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT I WAS BROUGHT TO THIS PLACE, THAT THE HAND HAS COME TO ME!


"TO WHOM THE HAND OF KAA SHALL COMETH ACROSS THE ABYSS SHALLE SEEKETH COMERSE IN DARK AND FORBIDDEN PLACES AND HE SHALLE OPEN THE GATEWAYE TO THAT WHICH HAS NOT YET ARRIVED
TO MY AMAZEMENT, JAMES HAD BROUGHT OUT AN ANCIENT "WORMIUS" EDITION OF THE DRED NECRONOMICON' BY THE MAD ARAB, ABDUL AL HAZARED

IT IS I, WILFRED, WHO HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO BRING THEM BACK ACROSS THE GATE SO THAT THEY MIGHT REGAIN THEIR LOST GLORY, THE DREAMS, THEY'VE TOLD IT ALL TO ME, ABOUT THE PLAIN OF LENG AND THE ANCIENT RACE WHICH DWELT THERE, THE BLACK TOWER FROM WENCE CAME THE HAND I MUST SERVE THEM, I MUST, WHO ARE WE TO QUESTION THESE COZMIC DESTINIES
I KNOW OF THAT WHICH YOU SPEAK, OF, THE GREAT MYSTERIES WHICH LIE ON THE THRESHOLD OF HUMAN AWARENESS, DIM REMNANTS OF UNSPEAKABLY ANCIENT MEMORIES BUT YOU CAN'T ALLOW YOURSELF TO SUCCUMB TO THEM
YOU'RE JEALOUS THATS WHAT IT IS, YOU'RE JEALOUS BECAUSE IT WAS ME NOT YOU THAT WAS CHOSEN
GET OUT
IT IS MY DUTY TO REMIND YOU JAMES IF YOU TAMPER WITH THIS EVIL IT CAN ONLY LEAD TO DOOM

OH WILFRED I'M WORRIED JAMES HAS BEEN ACTING EVER SO STRANGE
THE NEXT TIME I SAW JAMES WAS IN RESPONSE TO AN URGENT CALL FROM ANDREA
IT STARTED AFTER PROFESSOR STÖERLING CAME BY.....
VERRY INTERRESTING, THE LUNATE PROMINENCE DEFINITELY INDICATES PRE-HUMAN ORIGIN
IT WAS A SHORT TIME LATER THAT JAMES DISCOVERED THE SECRET ROOM, HE SPENDS MORE AND MORE TIME DOWN THERE, I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR WEEKS
TAKE ME TO THE ROOM ANDREA
CERTAINLY
BESIDES THE STRANGE SEAL ON THE FLOOR, NOTICED...
THATS ODD, JAMES SEEMS TO HAVE VISABLY AGED
SO YOU'VE COME TO SPY ON ME VERY WELL I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO SEE
Ilnaka mglwnafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah nagl
HE PRESSED SOMETHING IN THE WALL AND...
THEY'RE OUT THERE CAN'T YOU HEAR THEM THEY'RE CALLING ME
ERK ERK ERK
ERK ERK
JAMES PLEASE! YOU MUST LISTEN TO M...UNH
GET BACK
I SHALL NOT BE DEPRIVED OF THE APPROACHING VISITATIONS

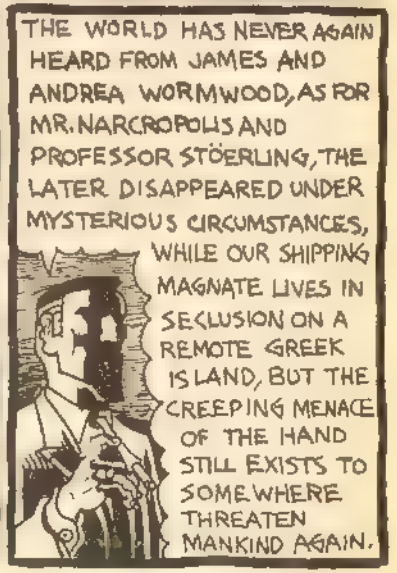
ERK ERK
JAMES, DARLING I'M COMING WITH YOU

ERK ERK
ANDREA, JAMES WAIT

ERK
JAMES THIS THING THAT AWAITS YOU IS FAR MORE HIDEOUS THAN YOU IMAGINE
GET AWAY I TELL YOU

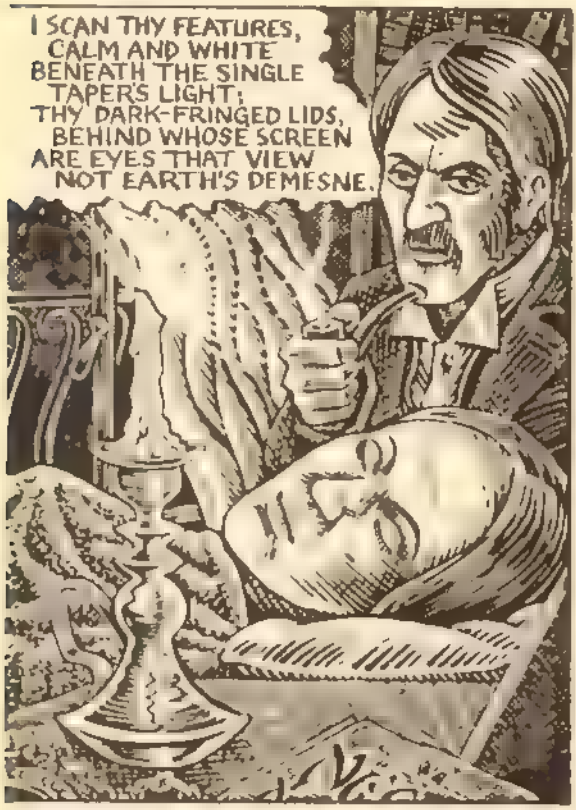
HE'S GONE, BUT IN THE STRUGGLE HE DROPPED THE HAND

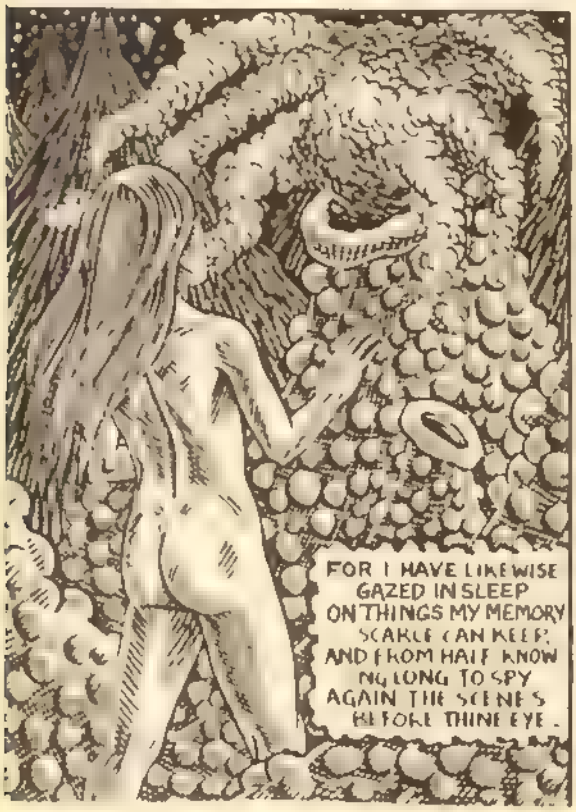
I SHALL TAKE THAT, IF YOU DON'T MIND, MR. KREEL


THE WORLD HAS NEVER AGAIN HEARD FROM JAMES AND ANDREA WORMWOOD, AS FOR MR. NARCROPOLIS AND PROFESSOR STÖERLING, THE LATER DISAPPEARED UNDER MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES, WHILE OUR SHIPPING MAGNATE LIVES IN SECLUSION ON A REMOTE GREEK ISLAND, BUT THE CREEPING MENACE OF THE HAND STILL EXISTS TO SOMEWHERE THREATEN MANKIND AGAIN.

# To A Dreamer

Poem by H.P. Lovecraft
Graphic Interpretation - C. Dallas





BUT WHAT IS THIS THAT SUBTLY SLIPS
OVER THY FACE AND PARTED LIPS?
WHAT FEAR DISTRACTS THY MIND
AND HEART,
THAT DROPS MUST FROM THY
FOREHEAD START?

OLD VISONS WAKE - THINE OPENING EYES
GLEAM BLACK WITH CLOUDS OF OTHER SKIES,

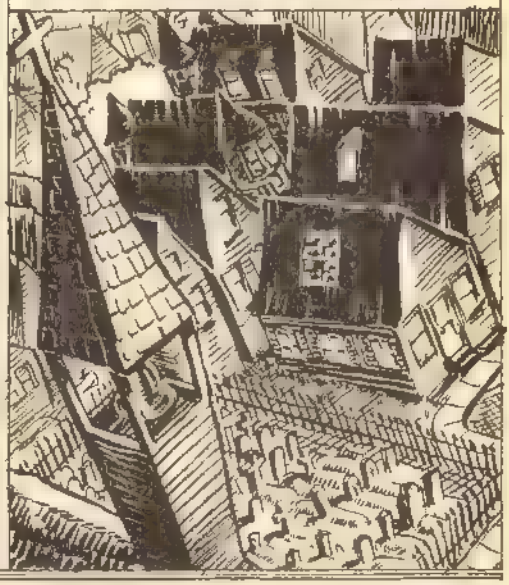
AND AS FROM SOME DEMONIAC SIGHT
I FLEE INTO THE HAUNTED NIGHT.

# The SHADOW from the ABYSS

AFTER 22 YEARS OF NIGHTMARE AND TERROR, SAVED ONLY BY A DESPERATE CONVICTION OF THE MYTHICAL SOURCE OF MY IMPRESSIONS, I AM UNWILLING TO VOUCH FOR THE TRUTH OF THAT WHICH I THINK I FOUND IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA IN THE NIGHT OF JULY 17-18, 1935. MUCH AS I PRAY IT WERE ONLY HALLUCINATION ITS REALISM WAS SO HIDEOUS THAT I SOMETIMES FIND HOPE IMPOSSIBLE.

**MY** NAME IS NATHANIEL WINGATE PEASLEE, AND THOSE WHO RECALL THE NEWSPAPER TALES OF A GENERATION AGO—OR THE PSYCHOLOGICAL JOURNALS 6 OR 7 YEARS AGO—WILL KNOW WHO I AM. THE PRESS WAS FULL OF DETAILS OF MY AMNESIA OF 1908-13, AND MUCH OF THE TRADITIONS OF HORROR, MADNESS, AND WITCHCRAFT OF MY NATIVE TOWN OF ARKHAM, MASS.

**IT** MAY BE THAT CENTURIES OF DARK BROODING HAD GIVEN TO CRUMBLING WHISPER-HAUNTED **ARKHAM** A PECULIAR VULNERABILITY TO SUCH SHADOWS, BUT MY OWN ANCESTRY IS ALTOGETHER NORMAL. WHAT CAME WAS FROM *SOMEWHERE ELSE*, WHERE EVEN I HESITATE TO ASSERT IN PLAIN WORDS.



IT WAS MAY 14, 1908 THAT THE QUEER AMNESIA CAME. IT WAS QUITE SUDDEN THOUGH I LATER REALIZED THAT CERTAIN BRIEF GLIMMERING VISIONS OF SEVERAL HOURS BEFORE WERE PREMONITORY SYMPTOMS. MY HEAD ACHED AND I HAD A UNIQUE FEELING THAT SOMEONE OR SOMETHING ELSE WAS TRYING TO GET POSSESSION OF MY THOUGHTS.

FINALLY I COLLAPSED BUT AT 3 AM, MAY 15, MY EYES OPENED AND I BEGAN TO SPEAK. BUT BEFORE LONG THE DOCTOR AND MY FAMILY WERE THOROUGHLY FRIGHTENED, BOTH BY THE TREND OF MY EXPRESSION AND LANGUAGE, AND THAT I HAD NO MEMORY OF MY IDENTITY AND PAST, THOUGH I SEEMED ANXIOUS TO CONCEAL THIS LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

MY EYES GAZED STRANGELY AT THE PERSONS AROUND ME AND MY FACIAL EXPRESSIONS WERE ALTOGETHER UNFAMILIAR. EVEN MY SPEECH SEEMED AWKWARD AND FOREIGN, THE PRONUNCIATION BEING BARBAROUSLY ALIEN AND ARCHAIC.

PHYSICAL STRENGTH RETURNED AT ONCE, THOUGH I REQUIRED AN ODD AMOUNT OF REEDUCATION IN THE USE OF MY HANDS, LEGS AND SUCH GENERALIA BECAUSE OF THIS I WAS FOR SOME TIME KEPT UNDER STRICT MEDICAL CARE.

SEEING MY FAILURE TO CONCEAL MY MNEMONIC LAPSE, I BECAME EAGER FOR INFORMATION. MY CHIEF EFFORTS WERE IN HISTORY, SCIENCE, ART, LANGUAGE AND FOLKLORE, SOME VERY ABSTRUSE AND OTHERS I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN ABOUT.

I HAD AN INEXPLICABLE COMMAND OF UNKNOWN KNOWLEDGE. I WOULD INADVERTENTLY REFER, WITH CASUAL ASSURANCE, TO SPECIFIC EVENTS IN DIM AGES OUTSIDE OF THE RANGE OF HISTORY, BOTH PAST AND FUTURE, WHICH ACTUALLY CAUSED FRIGHT

SOMETHING IN MY ASPECT AND SPEECH SEEMED TO EXCITE VAGUE FEARS AND SUSPICIONS, AS IF I WERE A BEING INFINITELY REMOVED FROM NORMALCY CASTING THE FEELING OF A BLACK HIDDEN HORROR AND INCALCULABLE GULFS.

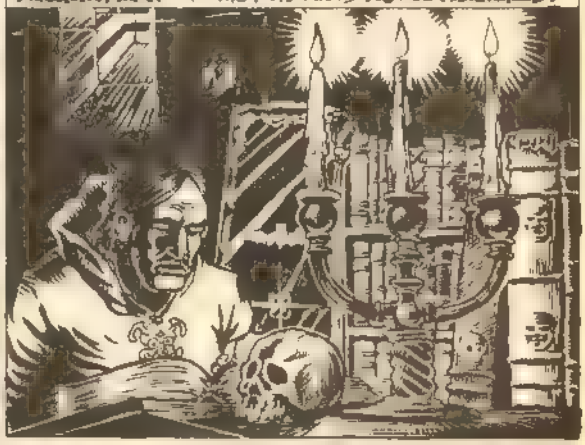
MY OWN FAMILY FELT THIS MOST POWERFULLY. MY WIFE REGARDED ME WITH EXTREME HORROR AND LOATHING, VOWING I WAS SOME UTTER ALIEN USURPING THE BODY OF HER HUSBAND, UNTIL SHE OBTAINED A LEGAL DIVORCE IN 1910.

IN 1909 I SPENT A MONTH IN THE HIMALAYAS, AND IN 1911 AROUSED MUCH ATTENTION THROUGH A CAMEL TRIP INTO THE UNKNOWN DESERTS OF ARABIA. WHAT HAPPENED ON THOSE TWO JOURNEYS I HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO LEARN.

IN 1912 I CHARTERED A SHIP AND SAILED THE ARCTIC, AFTERWARD SHOWING SIGNS OF DISAPPOINTMENT. LATER THAT YEAR I SPENT WEEKS IN THE CAVERNS OF VIRGINIA. BLACK LABYRINTHS OF UNRETRACEABLE COMPLEXITY.

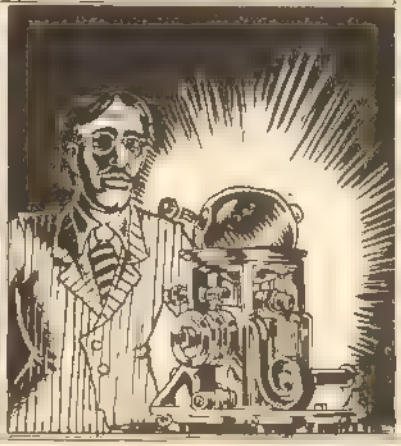
MY SOJOURNS AT THE UNIVERSITIES WERE MARKED WITH ABNORMALLY RAPID ASSIMILATION, AS IF THE SECONDARY PERSONALITY HAD AN ENORMOUSLY SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE TO MY OWN. AT TIMES THERE WERE EVEN UGLY REPORTS OF MY POWER TO CONTROL THE THOUGHTS AND ACTS OF OTHERS, THOUGH I SEEMED TO HAVE MINIMIZED DISPLAYS OF THIS ART.

OTHER UGLY REPORTS CONCERNED MY INTIMACY WITH LEADERS OF OCCULTIST GROUPS, AND MY READING INCLUDED SUCH THINGS AS THE *COMTE D'ERLETTES* **CULTES DES GOULES**, LUDWIGER PRINN'S **DE VERMIS MYSTERIIS**, THE **UNAUSSPRECHLICHEN KULTEN** OF **VON JUNZT**, AND THE DREADFUL **NECRONOMICON** OF THE MAD ARAB **ABDUL ALHAZRED.**



IN THE SUMMER OF 1913 I BEGAN TO DISPLAY SIGNS OF ENNUI AND RETURNING MEMORIES OF MY EARLIER LIFE, SO I RETURNED TO **ARKHAM** AND REOPENED MY LONG-CLOSED HOUSE ON CRANE STREET.

HERE I INSTALLED A MECHANISM OF A MOST CURIOUS ASPECT, CONSTRUCTED PIECEMEAL BY DIFFERENT MAKERS OF SCIENTIFIC APPARATUS AND GUARDED CAREFULLY FROM THE SIGHT OF ANYONE INTELLIGENT ENOUGH TO ANALYZE IT.

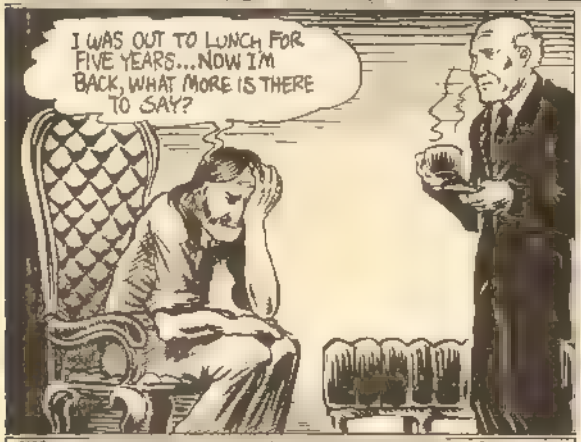


ON FRIDAY SEPT. 26, I DISMISSED THE HOUSEKEEPER AND MAID UNTIL NOON OF THE FOLLOWING DAY, AND WAS ATTENDED BY A LEAN, DARK **MAN** WITH ORIENTAL FEATURES AND LONG FINGERS **LATE INTO THE NIGHT**

IT WAS AT 6 O'CLOCK THAT A HESITANT, FOREIGN VOICE ON THE TELEPHONE ASKED DR. WILSON TO CALL AT MY HOUSE AND BRING ME OUT OF A PECULIAR FAINT, BUT ONLY I WAS AT HOME WHEN HE ARRIVED AT 6:15 AM.

IN THE LIBRARY FIREGRATE WERE MANY ASHES, AS THOUGH I HAD BURNT EVERY SCRAP OF PAPER I HAD WRITTEN FOR 5 YEARS. MY BREATHING WAS PECULIAR, BUT AFTER DR. WILSON ADMINISTERED A SEDATIVE IT BECAME MORE REGULAR.

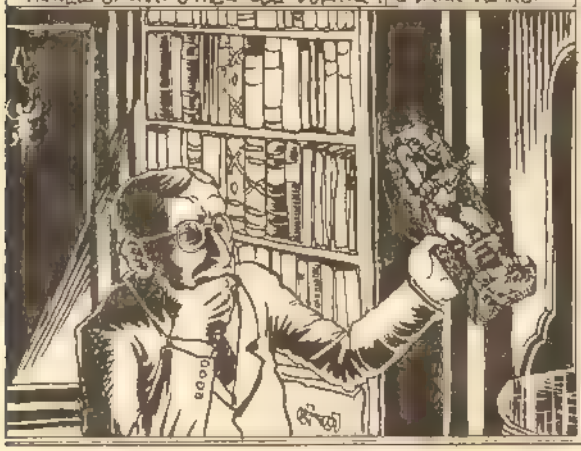
AT 11:15, SEPT. 17, I STIRRED VIGOROUSLY AND MY HITHERTO MASKLIKE FACE BEGAN TO SHOW SIGNS OF MY NORMAL SELF, UNTIL FINALLY I SHUDDERED VIOLENTLY AND MY EYES OPENED WIDE. NATHANIEL WINGATE PEASLEE HAD COME BACK TO EARTH.




MY REABSORPTION INTO NORMAL LIFE WAS A PAINFUL AND DIFFICULT PROCESS. THE LOSS OF OVER FIVE YEARS CREATES MORE COMPLICATIONS THAN CAN BE IMAGINED AND WHEN I HEARD OF MY ACTIONS SINCE 1908 I WAS ASTONISHED AND DISTURBED. BUT I TRIED TO VIEW THE EXPERIENCE AS PHILOSOPHICALLY AS WAS POSSIBLE.

VAGUE DREAMS AND QUEER IDEAS ASSAILED ME, AND MY CONCEPTION OF TIME — MY ABILITY TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN CAUSE, EFFECT AND SIMULTANEITY, SEEMED SUBTLY DISORDERED, SO THAT I FORMED CHIMERICAL NOTIONS ABOUT LIVING IN ONE ERA AND CASTING ONE'S MIND ALL OVER ETERNITY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF PAST AND FUTURE AGES.

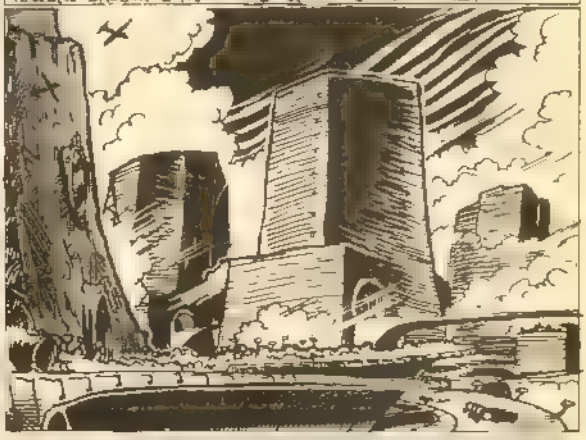
QUEERNESSES THAT HAD BAFFLED OTHERS SEEMED TO HARMONIZE TERRIBLY WITH SOME BACKGROUND OF BLACK KNOWLEDGE WHICH FESTERED IN THE CHASMS OF MY SUBCONSCIOUS. I BEGAN TO SEARCH FEVERISHLY FOR EVERY SCRAP OF INFORMATION BEARING ON THE STUDIES AND TRAVELS OF THAT OTHER SELF DURING THE DARK YEARS.



NOT ALL MY TROUBLES WERE SO ABSTRACT AS THIS: ALSO THERE WERE DREAMS AND VISIONS, WHICH I FELT HAD A PROFOUND AND TERRIBLE MEANING, AND A FRIGHTFUL CONNEXION WITH MYSELF, BUT THAT SOME PURPOSEFUL INFLUENCE WAS HOLDING ME FROM GRASPING THAT MEANING AND CONNEXION, A FEELING THAT FLOODED ME WITH APPREHENSION.

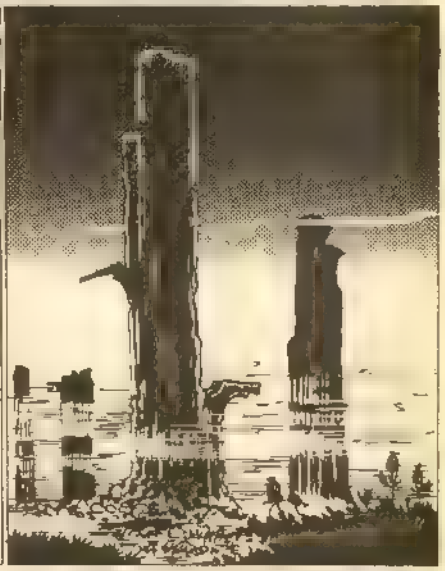
**THESE** GLIMPSES WERE AT FIRST MERELY STRANGE RATHER THAN HORRIBLE, THOUGH HORROR HUNG BROODINGLY OVER EVERYTHING I SAW I FELT THAT THE MOCKING CURVILINEAR HIEROGLYPHS ON THE WALLS WOULD BLAST MY SOUL WITH THEIR MESSAGE WERE I NOT GUARDED BY A MERCIFUL IGNORANCE.

**LATER**, MY DREAMS INCLUDED VISTAS FROM THE GREAT ROUND WINDOWS, AND FROM TITANTIC FLAT ROOVES THERE WERE ENDLESS LEAGUES OF GIANT BUILDINGS EACH IN ITS GARDEN AND RANGED ALONG PAVED ROADS FULLY TWO HUNDRED FEET WIDE, WITH THE TOWERS SHOOTING INTO THE GRAY STEAMY HEAVENS.

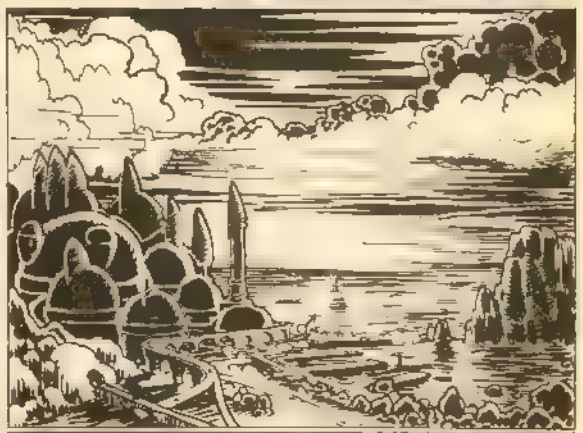


**STILL LATER**, I HAD VISIONS OF EXPLORING THE LOWER DEPTHS OF THESE CYCLOPEAN EDIFACES, FOR THERE WERE MULTIPLE LEVELS OF BLACK VAULTS BELOW, AND NEVER-OPENED TRAPDOORS SEALED DOWN WITH BANDS OF IMPERISHABLE METAL AND HOLDING DIM SUGGESTIONS OF SOME SPECIAL HORROR OF THE ELDRICHT ECHOING LOWER SPACES.

**IN** CERTAIN PLACES I BEHELD ENORMOUS DARK CYLINDRICAL TOWERS WHICH CLIMBED FAR ABOVE ANY OF THE OTHER STRUCTURES THESE APPEARED TO BE OF A TOTALLY UNIQUE NATURE AND WERE OF AWESOME AGE. AROUND ALL THESE ABERRANT STRUCTURES HOVERED THE SAME INEXPLICABLE AURA OF MENACE AS THAT BRED BY THE SEALED TRAPDOORS.

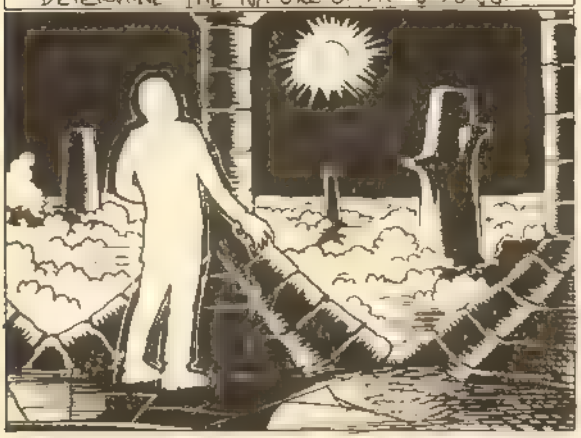


**BY** THE AUTUMN OF 1914 I BEGAN TO HAVE INFREQUENT DREAMS OF STRANGE FLOATING OVER THE CITY AND ITS ADJOINING REGIONS. I SAW MONSTROUS CONSTRUCTIONS OF BLACK OR IRIDESCENT STONE IN GLADES AND CLEARINGS WHERE PERPETUAL TWILIGHT REIGNED, AND TRAVERSED ROADS THROUGH STEAMY ABYSMAL MORASSES.



**AND** ONCE I SAW THE SEA - A BOUNDLESS, STEAMY EXPANSE BEYOND THE COLLOSAL STONE PIERS OF AN ENORMOUS TOWN OF DOMES AND ARCHES. GREAT SHAPELESS SUGGESTIONS OF SHADOW MOVED OVER IT, AND HERE AND THERE, ITS VAPOROUS SURFACE WAS VEXED WITH ANOMALOUS SPOUTINGS AND WHIRLPOOLS.

**THOUGH** MANY PERSONS HAVE HAD DREAMS BESIDE WHICH MINE WOULD PALE TO INSIGNIFICANCE IN STRANGENESS, THE TERRIFYING QUALITY OF MY DREAMS WAS BORNE OF THE UNHEALTHY SUGGESTION OF MNEMONIC RESTRAINT, IMPLYING THESE VISIONS TO BE MEMORIES OF MY OWN PERSON. I PLUNGED INTO STUDIES TO DETERMINE THE NATURE OF MY VISIONS.



**MY** CASE STUDIES OF OTHER AMNESIAS LIKE MINE COMMENCED, AND I WAS ABLE AFTER SOME YEARS, TO DETERMINE A PATTERN BEHIND THEM THROUGH ANCIENT, HOARY TOMES IN MUSTY LIBRARIES, AND NOTES MY ALTER-EGO HAD OVERLOOKED IN HIS CLEAN-UP. THEY WERE FRAGMENTARY HOWEVER AND PROVIDED LITTLE OTHER THAN CONFIRMATORY INDICATIONS.

EVENTUALLY MY RESEARCHES POINTED TO AN INCONCEIVABLY PECULIAR MYTHIC RACE THAT HAD EXISTED ON EARTH SOME FIFTY MILLION YEARS AGO. A RACE OF MOBILE VEGETABLES WHO ALONE OF EARTH'S MYTHOLOGICAL ATTENDANTS HAD CONQUERED TIME.

THESE BEINGS WERE ARCHIVISTS OF VAST PROPORTIONS, FOR IN THEIR LIBRARIES WERE VOLUMES OF TEXTS AND PICTURES HOLDING THE WHOLE HISTORY OF EVERY SPECIES THAT HAD BEEN OR WOULD BE, WITH TOTAL RECORDS OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS.

THEY HAD DEVISED A MEANS WHEREBY THE MIND OF AN EXPLORER WOULD PROJECT ITSELF FORWARD IN TIME UNTIL IT APPROACHED THE DESIRED AGE, THEN WOULD SEIZE THE BODY OF A NATIVE ORGANISM, DISPLACING THE PERSONALITY OF THE BODY'S OWNER

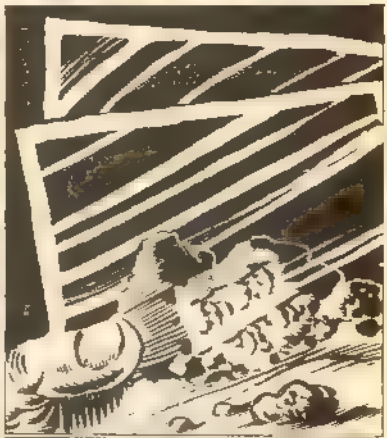
THE DISPLACED MIND THROWN BACK TO THE ATTACKER'S BODY AND ERA, WAS CAREFULLY GUARDED SO IT WOULD NOT HARM IT'S NEW BODY. OFTEN IT COULD BE QUESTIONED ABOUT LIFE IN IT'S TIME BY IT'S OWN TONGUE WHEN PREVIOUS EXPLORATIONS OF THE FUTURE HAD BROUGHT BACK KNOWLEDGE OF THAT LANGUAGE. THUS, THE GREAT RACE CAME TO KNOW EVERYTHING THAT WAS TO BE KNOWN ABOUT THE EARTH

THE CAPTIVE MINDS WERE PERMITTED ALL ACCESS TO STUDIES AND TRAVEL, WHICH RECONCILED MANY VICTIMS TO THEIR LOT, SINCE NONE WERE OTHER THAN KEEN, AND TO SUCH MINDS THE UNVEILING OF HIDDEN MYSTERIES OF EARTH AND SPACE AND TIME PROVIDED THE SUPREME EXPERIENCE OF LIFE IN SPITE OF THE HIDDEN HORRORS OFTEN UNVEILED.

AND HORRORS THERE WERE, FOR I FOUND OUT THAT THOSE FEAR-INSPIRING TRAPDOORS WERE WARDS SEALING IN AN ELDER PERIL THAT THE GREAT RACE HAD DRIVEN UNDERGROUND WHEN THEY FIRST ARRIVED ON EARTH. THESE FRIGHTFUL BEINGS I WAS NEVER ABLE TO FIND A CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF BUT THE GREAT RACE HAD FOUGHT NUMEROUS WARS WITH THEM, AND SEEMED TO REGARD THEM AS THE MENACE WHICH WOULD ULTIMATELY DRIVE THEM, EN MASSE, INTO THE FUTURE. A MASS MIGRATION OF FEAR-CRAZED MINDS, FLEEING UP THE CORRIDORS OF DISTANT AGES!!

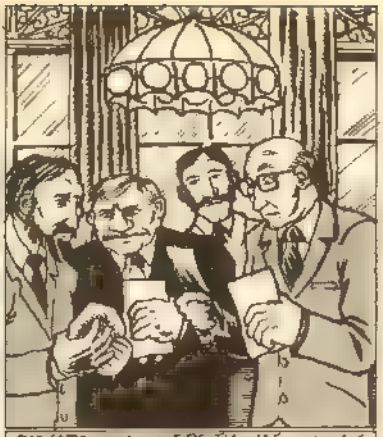
AS TIME PASSED, I CONTINUED TO CATALOG MY WILD, CAPRICIOUS DREAMS AND TRIED TO FIND SOME UNDERLYING PATTERN THAT WOULD CONVINCE ME EITHER OF THEIR NATURE AS WILD IMAGININGS OR AS DOUBT-DAMNED VERITY!!

ON JULY 10, 1934, THERE WAS FORWARDED TO ME A LETTER WHICH OPENED THE CULMINATING AND MOST HORRIBLE PHASE OF THE WHOLE MAD ORDEAL. IT WAS FROM PILBARRA WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND WAS SIGNED BY A MINING ENGINEER OF PROMINENCE.



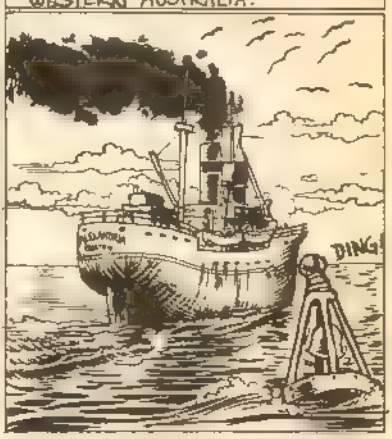
INCLOSED WERE PHOTOGRAPHS. IN COLD, INCONTROVERTIBLE REALISM, THERE STOOD A ROW OF WATER-RIDGED STORM-WEATHERED BLOCKS OF STONE, COMPLETE WITH THE CURSED CURVILINEAR CURSIVE DESIGNS THAT HAUNTED MY DREAMS!!

MR MACKENZIE, THE ENGINEER, HAD READ MY ARTICLES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL JOURNALS AND WAS DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY THE PROFOUND SIGNIFICANCE OF THEM TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT HE WISHED TO ASSIST ME IN AN INVESTIGATION OF THE STONES AND THEIR ELDER SECRETS

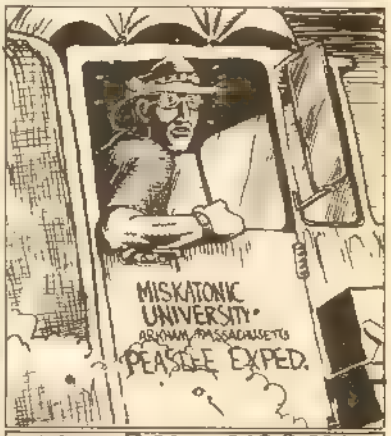


MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY WAS WILLING TO BACK THE EXPEDITION, AND I OBTAINED PROF WILLIAM DYER OF GEOLOGY FERDINAND C ASHLEY OF ANCIENT HISTORY TYLER M FREEBORN OF ANTHRO, WITH MY SON WINGATE, TO ACCOMPANY ME "DOWN UNDER".

MACKENZIE HAD TRACTORS WAITING AT PILBARRA, AND WE CHARTERED A SMALL TRAMP STEAMER IN BOSTON, SO THAT ON MARCH 28 1935, WE SET SAIL FOR THE CRUDE MINING TOWNS AND DREARY GOLDFIELDS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.




DISCOMFORT AND EXPECTANCY WERE ODDLY MINGLED IN MOST OF US WHEN AT LENGTH OUR PARTY RATTLED FORTH OVER THE ARID LEAGUES OF SAND AND ROCK. ON FRIDAY, MAY 31, WE FORDED A BRANCH OF THE DE GREY RIVER AND ENTERED THE REALM OF UTTER DESOLATION; DRY, HOT SANDY AND NOTHING ALIVE.




A CERTAIN POSITIVE TERROR GREW UPON ME AS WE ADVANCED INTO THIS ACTUAL SITE OF THE ELDER WORLD BEHIND THE LEGENDS, A TERROR ABETTED BY MY QUEER DREAMS STILL STRIKING AT ME IN ALL THEIR WEIRD DRIFTING SPLENDOR.

IT WAS ON MONDAY, JUNE 3, THAT WE SAW THE FIRST OF THE HALF BURIED BLOCKS... CYCLOPEAN MASONRY IN EVERY RESPECT LIKE THE BLOCKS IN THE WALLS OF MY DREAM BUILDINGS, AND IDENTICAL TO THOSE FOUND IN MY RESEARCH!

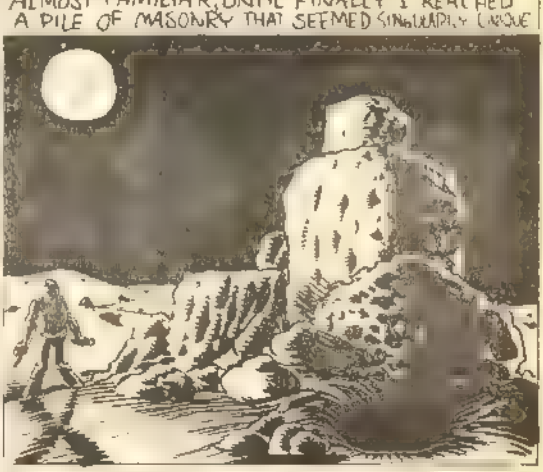
FOR A MONTH WE DUG UNEARTHING THOUSANDS OF SUCH BLOCKS THOUGH WE FAILED TO CIPHER ANY PATTERN EVEN THOUGH MY SON WINGATE FLEW ALOFT IN OUR AEROPLANE TO TRY TO DISTINGUISH LARGE SCALE OUTLINES.

BY THIS TIME MY HEAD WAS GRIEF ITSELF, FOR I SUFFERED FROM INSOMNIA AND SOUGHT TO EXHAUST MYSELF BY THE EXPEDIENT OF LONG NIGHT WALKS, AFTER WHICH I WOULD DRIFT INTO TORMENTED TWISTED SLUMBER.

ON THE NIGHT OF JULY 17, I WAS IN SUCH A STATE THAT NERVES ON EDGE, I PLODDED ON BENEATH THE EVIL BURNING MOON FAR LATER THAN WAS MY WONT.

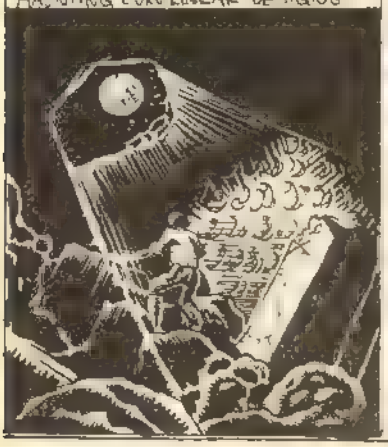
I FELT AS THOUGH I WERE ON SOME ELDRITCH RENDEZVOUS DRAWN TO THE NORTHEAST AND ASSAILED BY BEWILDERING FANTASIES, COMPULSIONS, AND PSEUDOMEMORIES.

IT WAS AS THOUGH SOMETHING WERE RATTLING AT THE LATCH OF MY RECOLLECTION, AS I STARED ACROSS THE BROKEN LINES OF STONE, FOR AT ONCE THEY WERE STRANGELY OMINOUS, AND YET ALMOST FAMILIAR, UNTIL FINALLY I REACHED A PILE OF MASONRY THAT SEEMED SINGULARLY UNIQUE

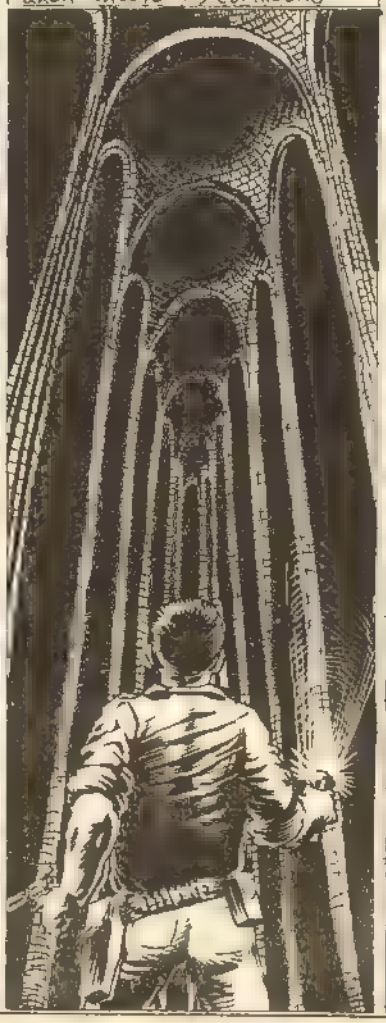


I LOOKED ABOUT AND BEHELD A BLACK HOLE FROM WHICH THERE ISSUED A STIFF, COOL BREEZE, AND AS I STARED, A FEARFUL COMPULSION BROKE OVER ME, AND POCKETING MY FLASHLIGHT, I CLIMBED ON DOWN

BENEATH ME WAS A CHAOS OF TUMBLED MASONRY, AND ON EITHER SIDE ROSE MASSIVE WALLS TERMINATING IN HUGE GROININGS, COVERED WITH MINISCULE CARVINGS AND THOSE HAUNTING CURVILINEAR DESIGNS

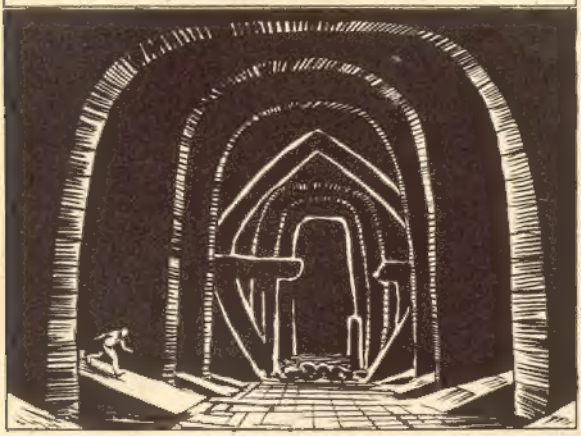


AS I STRODE ABOUT, MY MIND A BLUR OF SCINTILLANT IMAGES, AND I FELT I KNEW MY WAY AROUND IN THIS BURIED WORLD OF UNHOLY ARCHAISM, I KNEW THE PATTERNS OF THESE GREAT VAULTS AND CORRIDORS"



COULD I STILL FIND THE HOUSE OF THE WRITING MASTER, AND THE TOWER WHERE SIGGHA, THE CAPTIVE MIND FROM THE STARHEADED VEGETABLE CARNIVORES OF ANTARCTICA, HAD CHISELED CERTAIN PICTURES INTO THE BLANK WALL?

HOW COULD I KNOW THAT THIS LEVEL SHOULD HAVE BEEN FAR UNDERGROUND? HOW DID I KNOW THAT THE LONG PASSAGE TO THE SQUARE OF PILLARS OUGHT TO LIE ON THE LEFT ONE LEVEL ABOVE ME? OR THAT THERE WOULD BE ONE OF THOSE HORRIBLE METAL-BANDED TRAP-DOORS AT THE VERY BOTTOM FOUR LEVELS BELOW ME?



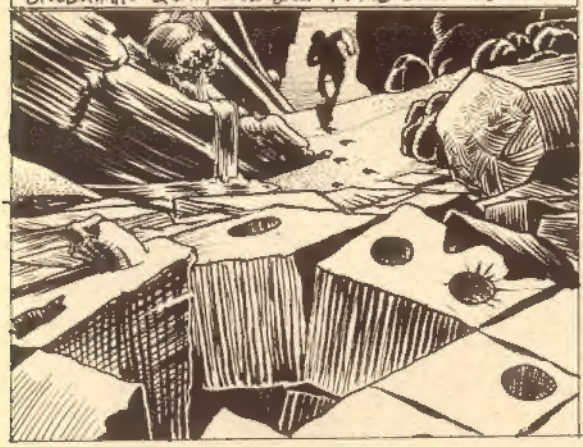
I KEPT NO TRACK OF TIME DURING MY DOWNWARD SCRAMBLE. SO SEETHING WITH BAFFLING HINTS AND IMAGES WAS MY MIND THAT ALL OBJECTIVE MATTERS SEEMED WITHDRAWN TO INCALCULABLE DISTANCES. PHYSICAL SENSATION WAS DEAD, AND EVEN FEAR REMAINED ONLY AS A WRAITHLIKE INACTIVE GARGOYLE THAT LEERED AND CAPERED IMPOTENTLY AT ME.

WOULD THE PASSAGE TO THE HALL OF ALIEN MINDS BE OPEN? IN THAT HALL THE CAPTIVE MIND OF A HALF-PLASTIC DENIZEN OF THE HOLLOW INTERIOR OF A TRANSPLUTONIAN PLANET 18,000,000 YEARS IN THE FUTURE KEPT A CERTAIN THING IT HAD MODELED FROM CUY.

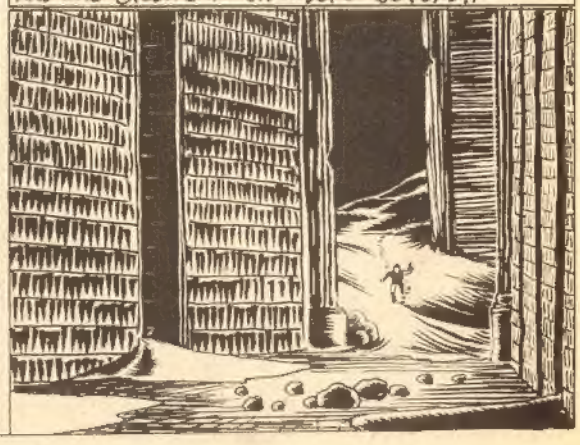
WOULD THE WAY TO THE CENTRAL ARCHIVES STILL BE OPEN? THERE, SAID THE DREAMS AND LEGENDS, HAD REPOSED THE WHOLE HISTORY OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM, AND IT WAS THEN THAT THE MADNESS TOOK CONTROL OF ME UTTERLY!!!

IF EVER THERE WERE SUCH A VAULT AS I HAD DREAMED OF, I COULD OPEN IT IN A TRICE!! I RAN PAST GREAT COLLAPSED MASSES OF STONE, LEPT YAWNING CHASMS, PAST THE ROOM OF MACHINES, WHEN SUDDENLY I PASSED THE TRAPDOOR!

IT WAS OPEN, YAWNING WIDE AND BLACK AND DEEP AS THE ROCKY CORE OF THE EARTH, WITH A DAMNABLE TRICKLE OF COOL WIND FILTERING UP FROM IT, BUT IN A MOMENT I WAS PAST, STILL RUNNING DOWN THE VAST, DETRITUS-CLUTTERED CORRIDORS TOWARD AN UNCERTAIN GOAL, FAR BACK IN THE STILLY VOID!!!



INDEED, IN AN INDEFINITE TIME MADE ALL THE MORE UNCLEAR BY THE FLITTING DREAM-IMAGES THAT ASSAILED MY CONSCIOUSNESS, I FOUND MYSELF IN THE VAST HALL OF ARCHIVES, SURROUNDED BY ENORMOUS METAL SHELVES REACHING TO THE VERY TOPS OF THE GROINING, AND INTO CYCLOPEAN CHAMBERS BEYOND!!



OF THE PARTICULAR GOAL OF MY INSANE RACING, MY CONSCIOUS MIND HELD NO HINT. THERE WAS, HOWEVER, SOME FORCE OF EVIL POTENCY PULLING AT MY DAZED WILL AND BURIED RECOLLECTION, SO I FELT I WAS NOT RUNNING AT RANDOM. I WANTED TO UNLOCK SOMETHING, I KNEW, AND MY HANDS TWITCHED WITH THE LOCK'S COMBINATION CODE!

HERE I HAD TALKED WITH THE MIND OF NUG-SOTH, A MAGICIAN OF THE DARK CONQUERORS OF 16,000 AD, AND WITH YIANG-LI, A PHILOSOPHER FROM THE CRUEL EMPIRE OF TSAN-CHAN, WHICH IS TO COME IN 5000 A.D., AND WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE AUSTRALIAN PHYSICIST NEVEL KINGSTON-BROWN, OF THE YEAR 2,518 A.D.!!

THE SPIRITS OF MANY MINDS I HAD SPOKEN TO NOW ROSE LIKE PALE WRAITHS; THAT OF A ROMAN, TITUS SEMPRONIUS BLAESUS, A QUAESTOR OF SULLA'S TIME, AND KHEPHNES, AN EGYPTIAN OF THE 14TH DYNASTY, WHO TOLD ME OF THE MIND SHATTERING REALITY OF NYARLATHOTEP, WITH THAT OF CROM-GA, A CIMMERIAN CHIEFTAIN OF 15,000 B.C., AND WITH SO MANY OTHERS THAT MY DAZZLED BRAIN COULD NOT HOLD THE SHOCKING SECRETS AND DIZZYING MARVELS I LEARNED FROM THEM. AND SUDDENLY, I HAD ARRIVED WHERE I HAD BEEN DRIVEN TO ALL THESE LONG, HAUNTED YEARS AND I SHUDDERED WITH INSANE ANTICIPATION.

DAZEDLY I LOOKED OVER THE ROWS OF GRAYISH CASE ENDS, AND FELT A TREMENDOUS SURGE OF SOME WHOLLY INEXPLICABLE EMOTION. HANDS SHAKING, AND DRAWN DOWN THE AEONS, I REACHED FORTH, PLAYED MY FINGERS ACROSS A LOCK, AND LO! A BOOK-BOX CAME LOOSE INTO MY HANDS, AND I SAT HEAVILY ON THE FLOOR, FOR I FELT AS THOUGH I HAD FINALLY REACHED THE CLIMAX OF SOME DREAD LIFE'S SEARCH, AND FEARED TO DRAW THE BOOK FORTH, AS I KNEW WHAT I SHOULD FIND, AND THE REALIZATION NEARLY PARALYZED ME!

FINALLY, IN THE DARK, I COLLECTED MY COURAGE, LIFTED THE COVER, PLACED MY FLASHLIGHT BETWEEN MY TEETH AND THEN FLASHED THE BEAM ACROSS THE PAGES. I LOOKED FOR AN INSTANT, THEN COLLAPSED SILENTLY. I SANK BACK AND MOANED INWARDLY, FOR WHAT I HAD DREADED AND EXPECTED WAS THERE. EITHER I WAS DREAMING, OR ALL OF TIME AND SPACE HAD BECOME A GAG, AND I WAS THE TRANSCHRONIC BUTT OF THE GRAND COSMIC JOKE !!!

I WOULD TEST THE HORROR BY CARRYING THIS THING BACK AND SHOWING IT TO MY SON, IF IT WERE INDEED A REALITY. BUT AS I FLED PAST THE OPEN TRAP, I BEHELD SOMETHING IN THE DUST NEXT TO MY OWN FOOTPRINTS, OF UTMOST TERROR!

SUDDENLY THERE AROSE A TERRIBLE SHRILL WHISTLING, AND A VIOLENT PURPOSEFUL WIND THAT BLEW SAVAGELY AND FRIGIDLY FROM THAT ABOMINABLE GULF WHENCE THE WHISTLING AND SHRIEKING ISSUED FORTH!!!

NOW, INDEED, THE PUREST ESSENCE OF NIGHTMARE WAS UPON ME, AND AS I FLED THROUGH THE DARK I WAS ASSAILED BY SUCH IMAGES AS I COULD NOT TELL WHERE OR WHEN I WAS, OR EVEN IF I WAS, UNTIL FINALLY UNCONSCIOUSNESS CAME.

I WAKENED BENEATH THE BLOATED, FUNGOID MOON, AND LURCHED TO MY FEET TO STAGGER BACK TO CAMP, AND SAW THAT MY FLASHLIGHT WAS GONE, AND LIKEWISE MY METAL CASE, IF IT HAD EVER EXISTED. NO EYE HAD SEEN, NOR HAND TOUCHED THAT BOOK SINCE MAN'S ADVENT ON EARTH, AND YET WHEN MY FLASHLIGHT HAD FLICKERED ON THE QUEERLY PIGMENTED LETTERS ON THE AGE-BROWNED BRITTLE PAGES, THEY WERE NO NAMELESS HIEROGLYPHS OF EARTH'S UNKNOWN YOUTH. THEY WERE, INSTEAD, THE LETTERS OF OUR FAMILIAR ALPHABET, SPELLING OUT THE WORDS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN MY OWN HANDWRITING, SCRIPT OVER 250,000,000 YEARS OLD!!!! Ω

HERE AT
SKULL
COMIX WE
MAKE NO BONES
ABOUT BEING
WEIRD!
SKULL
SKULL
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